



FISCAL MEMORANDUM

SB 1134 - HB 1382

March 6, 2023

SUMMARY OF BILL AS AMENDED (004983): Authorizes the estate of a public safety dispatcher who dies in the line of duty to receive an annuity and be eligible to receive health insurance benefits from a local government. Specifies that the estate of a public safety dispatcher is eligible to receive the \$25,000 death benefit for first responders from a local emergency management agency who are killed in the line of duty.

FISCAL IMPACT OF BILL AS AMENDED:

Other Fiscal Impact – For each individual death benefit awarded, there will be an increase in state expenditures of \$50,000 per benefit per year over a five-year period for a total of \$250,000. Any health insurance benefit costs incurred by local governments to provide benefits to surviving dependents will shift to the state. The extent and timing of any such impacts are dependent upon multiple unknown factors and cannot be determined with reasonable certainty.

Assumptions for the bill as amended:

- Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 7-51-210, the estate of any emergency responder who is killed in the line of duty is entitled to receive a \$250,000 annuity, with the estate receiving an annual installment of \$50,000 for five years.
- The proposed legislation adds public safety dispatchers to the list of emergency responders who would be eligible for such annuity if the emergency responder was current in any required training and physical exams at the time of death.
- Based on information previously provided by the Department of Finance and Administration (F&A), the department budgets for seven line-of-duty deaths of law enforcement officers annually.
- Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-27-404(b), if a local government offers health insurance benefits to first responders, the local government may offer or continue to provide health insurance benefits to the surviving spouse and children of a first responder killed in the line of duty for up to two years after the death of the first responder. The state must reimburse a local government for the local government's portion of the health insurance costs.
- The proposed legislation adds a public safety dispatcher's surviving spouse and children to the list of those who would be eligible for health insurance benefits if the local government offers health insurance benefits.

- It is assumed that most local governments participate in providing benefits for survivors and will be reimbursed by the state; however, local governments can choose from a variety of healthcare coverages, and the rates vary between plans offered by each local government.
- In the event such a death occurs in a local government that provides benefits for survivors, there will be an effective decrease in local government expenditures. Any such decrease in local government expenditures is dependent on multiple unknown factors, including the location and timing of any deaths, and cannot be reasonably determined.
- Under current law, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 58-2-126(a), the estate of any first responder from a local emergency management agency who is killed in the line of duty is entitled to receive the sum of \$25,000, upon receipt by F&A of a certified death certificate and an affidavit from the decedent's employer that the decedent was killed in the line of duty.
- The proposed legislation would clarify that, for the purpose of receiving such death benefit, an emergency manager who provides direct logistical support during an emergency includes public safety dispatchers.
- Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 58-2-126(b) all local emergency management agency personnel are considered first responders from local emergency management agencies; therefore, there is not estimated to be an increase in such death benefit payments as a result of the proposed legislation.

CERTIFICATION:

The information contained herein is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Krista Lee Carsner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Krista Lee Carsner, Executive Director

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